



Red Arrow Brigade
FAMILY UPDATE
April 16, 2009

Here's our sixth update from Fort Bliss as many of the units in the 32nd BCT approach their seventh week of training in New Mexico. Most of our soldiers are still busy training but we're winding down as we get closer to leaving for Iraq.

Prior to leaving Bliss, most soldiers have taken a physical fitness test that assesses soldiers' physical strength and endurance in three areas- two minutes of push-ups and situps, and a timed 2-mile run. The standards to pass each event depend on the gender and age of each soldier but each soldier must at least get 60 points out of 100 to pass. For some, the test can be quite challenging while others push themselves to max out their score.



In last week's update, we mentioned validation as the last important step here at Bliss. As a stepping stone to validation, each company is required to complete a mission readiness exercise. The purpose of this seven-day exercise is to apply the training we've received to real-life scenarios. There are trainers who observe our performance and provide us with feedback.



The Morale, Welfare and Recreation center at the Post Exchange hosted a Guitar Hero playoff among soldiers last week. That same day, Papa John's pizza brought in 500 pizzas to show their support for the troops. Soldiers munched on the free pizza and watched as soldiers made their way on stage to play a solo or group performance of Guitar Hero.

Brig. Gen. Donald Dunbar, The Adjutant General, and Brig. Gen. Mark Anderson, the Deputy Adjutant General, visited the 32nd Brigade earlier this week. They visited a shooting range and later ate at the dining facility where they were able to spend some time with soldiers.

Most of our pass dates start within the next few days. Many families will be visiting the area to see their soldier before they leave for Iraq. We hope you enjoy the time you get to spend together.

We've highlighted four local areas so far. Here's some information on Ruidoso, N.M. (information from Wikipedia and Ruidoso Web site).

Ruidoso

Ruidoso is a village in Lincoln County, New Mexico, adjacent to the Lincoln National Forest. The cities of Ruidoso Downs, Hollywood, Mescalero, and Alto are suburbs of Ruidoso and contribute to the Ruidoso Micropolitan Statistical Area's population of 21,223.



A mountain resort town, Ruidoso lies in the rugged Sierra Blanca mountain range of south-central New Mexico, where it merges with the Sacramento Mountains to the south. Ruidoso is a rapidly growing resort community due to the region's alpine scenery, Ruidoso Downs racetrack, and slopes of Ski Apache, the Mescalero Apache Indian owned ski resort on the 12,000-foot mountain Sierra Blanca. The tribe also operates the Inn of the Mountain Gods resort in the area, which includes a casino, hotel, and golf course. Ruidoso is the largest community in Lincoln County and serves as the regional economic hub.

Ruidoso has many area attractions and other points of interest.

- Hondo Iris Farm and Gallery is located 24 miles east of Ruidoso. The garden boasts one of New Mexico's most beautiful gardens. The gallery is in a 100 year old adobe building which features paintings, sculpture, and jewelry by Hondo artist Alice Warder Seely.
- Ruidoso Downs Race Track and Casino has live horse racing, hot slots, live entertainment, great food and much more.
- Riversong Theater at Mountain Annie's is a beautiful and versatile dinner theater that serves and entertains 50-300 guests.
- Hubbard Museum of the American West is a museum where the visitor can not only experience the West, but actually participate as one passes through various portals of time; from the day when only Native Americans inhabited the area right on up and into our modern world. It is a living, exciting experience that has something for everyone.
- Rainwaters has unique gifts from all over the world and include distinctive art glass, hand-painted ceramics and intricate wood carvings.

We thank you for your support. For families who are traveling to see their soldier, we wish you a safe trip.

—Spc. Michelle Gonzalez
32nd BCT Public Affairs

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Photo Captions

Page 1 (top): Sgt. 1st Class Derek Crowley of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 32nd Brigade uses the last few seconds of his physical fitness test to knock out the last repetitions of push-ups during his physical fitness test. *Photo by Spc. Michelle Gonzalez*

Page 1 (bottom): Pfc. Keith Smith of Headquarters Troop, 1- 105th Cavalry, enjoys the free Papa John's pizza and listens to soldiers' Guitar Hero performances. *Photo by Spc. Michelle Gonzalez*

Page 2: This photo from Wikipedia captures a view of downtown Ruidoso.